

Letter from Taizé

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Prayer and meeting
with Brother Roger

EAST BERLIN 18th October

simultaneously in the
Catholic and Lutheran cathedrals

WARSAW 21st October

NOV 24 1986

MATTHEW and Luke begin their Gospels with stories about the infancy of Jesus. In taking up, each in his own way, traditions concerning the birth of Christ, they are not acting out of biographical or sentimental motives, but attempting to respond to something deeper: the essential question about the identity of their Lord. Who is this Jesus who speaks with so much authority about God, and who calls us to follow him without looking back?

To answer this question, Matthew and Luke set Jesus in the context of an ongoing history. These stories show us a Person who is the answer to his people's expectations and yet is much more than that. Jesus is the Yes to all of God's promises (cf. 2 Cor 1,20), but in a way greater than anyone could have imagined ahead of time.

Matthew begins his Gospel with "the book of the genesis of Jesus Christ" (1,1). The Biblical way of showing someone's rootedness in history, the list of generations links Jesus to his ancestors and identifies him as the son of David and son of Abraham, in other words both the expected Messiah and the heir to the Promise. Upon looking closer, however, we discover that the apparently solid structure of the genealogy contains important gaps. There is an unexpected, irregular side to it, symbolized by the presence of women. At the end the two dimensions are brought to a climax. Joseph represents the normal, legal transmission of a name and a heritage, but suddenly the chain is broken. His wife Mary then takes centre stage in all her vulnerability which is at the same time openness to the Spirit of God.

The following verses (1,18-25) tell the same story in other terms. The unexpected is represented by Mary, "with child through the Holy Spirit" (1,18). But the incarnation is not complete until the child receives a name, and thus a legal status and a place in history. Joseph, "the righteous man" (1,19) must provide this; his true greatness comes from his capacity to relinquish his "natural" prerogatives and to seek actively the will of God. Matthew is very interested in the figure of Joseph: listening in the voice of God, he watches over "the child and his mother" while at the same time remaining in their shadow. He keeps nothing for himself. Righteous like Abraham ready to sacrifice even his only son (cf. Gen 22), like the Baptizer ready to become less so that Christ can become more (cf. John 3,30), Joseph is the model believer, happy to give his life instead of jealously holding it back (cf. Mark 3,34-37).

A second polarity in these chapters is geographical. On the one hand the great city of Jerusalem where the powerful King Herod rules; on the other the obscure town of Bethlehem, birthplace of the Messiah-King Jesus. Warned by foreigners who had come to pay their respects to "the king of the Jews", Herod unleashes all his violence to destroy his unknown rival and is only able to augment the evil and disorder in the world. Human malice causes pain but is powerless against God's designs of love (cf. also Matt 27,62-66).

The journeys in Matthew 1-2 should also be mentioned, since they are always significant. In himself the child Jesus retraces the thousand-year pilgrimage of his people. He goes down to Egypt like the

THE CHRISTMAS BIBLE READINGS

Jesus' childhood

patriarchs (2,13-15) and returns to "the land of Israel" (2,20.21) like the Israelites under Moses. And others set out on the road towards him: the visit of the wise men symbolizes the arrival of "the last days" when all nations will come up to worship the Lord (Is 60; 2,2-4). Jesus is thus shown to be not merely the heir of David but the source of a universal communion, thus fulfilling the promise made to Abraham of a blessing transmitted to "all the families of the earth" (Gen 12,3).

LUKE places, at the beginning of his Gospel, a whole series of "God's poor" waiting for "the consolation of Israel" (2,25). He builds his account around two parallel annunciations and births, those of John the Baptist and of Jesus. These chapters contain countless Biblical allusions. That is another way to show that the coming of Christ fulfills the centuries of expectation of God's people.

John's family represents the people of the Covenant before the coming of the Messiah. His parents are righteous, unimpeachable but sterile (1,6-7), worthy successors to Abraham and Sara (cf. Gen 18). Zechariah is a man of the Temple, a mediator between the Lord and "the multitude of the people" (1,10). But his trust in God is not total, and struck dumb, he is unable to bring God's blessing to the waiting crowd (1,22). That benediction will have to go a long way round before finally arriving at its goal (cf. 2,34; 24,50).

To make a new beginning possible, the family of Jesus takes over. In contrast to Matthew, Luke is especially interested in Mary, the mother of the Lord. An image of "daughter Zion" welcoming her Lord with rejoicing (1,28; cf. Zeph 3,14-15; Zech 2,14; 9,9-10) or of the Ark of the Covenant crossing the land (1,39-45; cf. 2 Sam 6), Mary shows to perfection the humble and trusting attitude of a believer.

These chapters are bathed in an atmosphere of fulfillment. The Holy Spirit, the specific gift of the last days (cf. Joel 2,28-29), is everywhere, along with songs of praise. Although the shadow of the Cross is not absent (2,7.34-35), the dominant note is one of "great joy" (2,10). At the birth of Christ heaven and earth are finally united (2,13).

Like Matthew, Luke sets the child and his parents on the road. He describes a coming and going between faraway Galilee and Judea, the heart of the Promised Land, first Bethlehem and then Jerusalem. In this way the stories of Jesus' infancy begin and end in the Temple, centre of the nation's worship. There, the holy family fulfils "the Law of the Lord" (2,22-24) and, in the "now" of old Simeon, a new beginning is announced. Jesus will be "the glory of his people" because he is a "light for the nations" (cf. Is 49,6). From Jerusalem a message will go forth to "revolutionize the whole world" (cf. Acts 17,6). □

POPE JOHN PAUL II AT TAIZÉ

During his recent four-day visit to South-East France, Pope John Paul spent the first part of Sunday morning 5th October at Taizé. Here are the words of the Pope, as well as some extracts from newspaper articles reporting the visit.

Pages 3 to 6

POPE JOHN PAUL II AT TAIZÉ

Saturday 4 October. The arrival of John Paul I has been prepared in calm and prayer. The hill has stayed itself, taking no notice of the security forces which, for this last night, have taken over the roads and surrounding woods.

8pm. On the eve of the Pope's arrival, everyone is working hard. 5,000 people are arriving this evening, but the atmosphere is simple and serene. Without interruption, arriving coaches release groups, eyes circled by tiredness after long journeys.

A NIGHT OF VIGIL

At the end of the evening prayer under the tent, Brother Roger speaks. He mentions the visit he made to the Pope while the latter was still in hospital following the assassination attempt of St Peter's Square. He takes up questions posed by two young people: How is it possible to make a life-long commitment? How can we begin again once we have become discouraged?

10pm. Everything has returned to calm...almost silence. Taizé has expanded, making a space of adoration. Some of the youth have come from other countries. Their diversity lends colour to the mosaic of prayer.

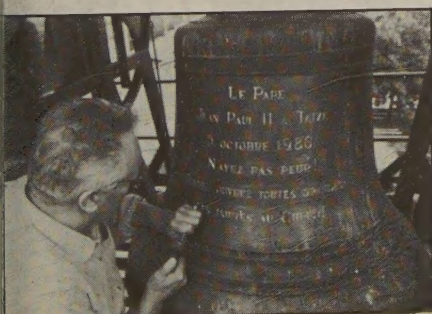
11pm. Discreetly, in the cold of the night, soldiers and policemen keep guard all around the church and its tent extension.

2am. The most touching aspect of this calm night is all that is happening in the small village church. The silence there proclaims its intensity. Young people praying, bowed down to the ground. The flickering of the red sanctuary light beckons attentiveness to the Eucharistic reserve.

4am. Still in the village church: all night through people come and go in ceaseless relay. A vigil of prayer that lasts until the breaking dawn places a tinge of light upon the stained glass windows, and all leave to assemble before the tent. The singing will start at 7am. In an hour and a half, John Paul II will be here.

EXTRACTS FROM NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

The big bell at Taizé now bears these words from the beginning of the Pope's ministry: "Do not be afraid! Open wide the doors for Christ!" ▼



Words of welcome by Brother Roger

Holy Father,

If the heart were to express all our gratitude and all our happiness in welcoming you to Taizé, it would take days.

For decades now, the conscience of Christians has been awakened, perhaps as never before, to the urgent need for justice and peace.

And now across the earth so many of the young, often with astonishment, are discovering in the Risen Christ the meaning of their lives. It is as if a longing for God has arisen when everything was covered with a thick cloud of indifference. And so we can sense the coming of a century of deep faith.

This hope does not cause us to forget those who have been brought to a standstill by discouragements and by an attitude of "what's the use?". Some have been marked by broken relationships of all sorts, especially within families. Their hearts at times are dying of abandonment.

Yes, human abandonments and loneliness are among the deepest wounds of our time. How then could we not devote all our energies to enable everyone to discover a source of communion?

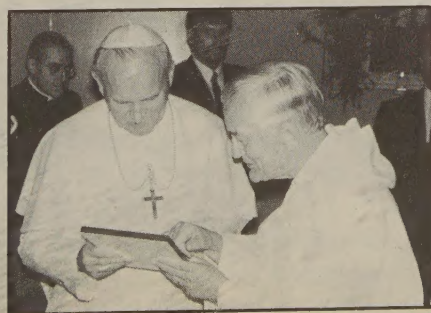
You know, Holy Father, that week after week young Europeans come to Taizé to pray and to draw from the wellsprings of the faith, while at the same time remaining attentive to the building up of the vast human family.

The daily aspiration of my brothers and myself is for every young person to discover Christ, not Christ taken in isolation, but the "Christ of communion" present in fullness in that mystery of communion which is his Body, the Church.

There, many of the young can find a place to commit their whole lives to the very end, and to do so without a levelling of values. There they have all they need to become creators of trust, of reconciliation, not just among themselves but together with all the generations, from the very old to little children.

In our community of Taizé, following the "Christ of communion" is like a fire that burns us. We would go to the ends of the earth to look for ways, to ask, to call, to implore if need be, but never from the outside, always while remaining within that unique communion which is the Church.

Dear Holy Father, can I say to you in simplicity of heart that, trusting in your ministry as universal pastor, my brothers and I love you. Your coming to Taizé calls forth a joy that touches the depths of the soul. □



Pope John Paul II in the Church of Reconciliation

Dear Brothers, dear Sisters, dear friends,

1. I thank you, dear Brother Roger, for the words full of trust and affection you have just addressed to me. And I greet you all in the joy of Christ: you, the Brothers of this community, and you, Sisters of St Andrew who assist them; you, the inhabitants of Taizé, of Ameugny and the surrounding villages; especially you, the young, and all of you who have come to spend a few days or a few hours on the hill of Taizé. I am happy to be among you and to pray with you.

Like you, pilgrims and friends of the community, the Pope is only passing through. But one passes through Taizé as one passes close to a spring of water. The traveller stops, quenches his thirst and continues on his way. The Brothers of the community, you know, do not want to keep you. They want, in prayer and silence, to enable you to drink the living water promised by Christ, to know his joy, to discern his presence, to respond to his call, then to set out again to witness to his love and to serve your brothers and sisters in your parishes, your towns and villages, your schools, your universities, and in all your places of work. Blessed be Christ who, here in Taizé, and in many other places in his Church, causes springs of water to well up for the travellers thirsting for Him that we are!

2. Today, in all the Churches and Christian communities and even among the highest political leaders in the world, the Taizé Community is known for the trust always full of hope that it places in the young. It is above all because I share this trust and this hope that I have come here this morning.

Dear young people, to bring to the world the joyful news of the Gospel, the Church needs your enthusiasm and your generosity. You know, it can happen that your elders, after the difficult journey and the trials they have undergone, fall prey to fear or weariness and let the dynamism which is a mark of every Christian vocation grow weak. It can also happen that institu-



Arrival in Fog ▲

Since 7am, 5,000 people have been waiting in the church, enlarged by two tents attached to the rear. Outside, on an adjacent field, another 2,000 are gathered in front of television screens which will enable them to follow what is happening.

Because of the thick fog covering the whole of Burgundy, the Pope will be coming from Lyon by car: the helicopters had to stay in their hangars. The fog makes the arrival in the tiny village out in the country somehow more moving and mysterious. It is 8.40am.

"AS ONE PASSES NEAR A SPRING OF WATER"

The Pope enters the Church of Reconciliation. For the first time, a pope is walking on the ecumenical ground of Taizé.

Brother Roger embraces the Holy Father on the low podium, while children, flowers in their hands, stand close by. Jean Paul II greets the people in the church and sits down in a wooden armchair.

Brother Roger's words of welcome are brief. He concludes, "Dear Holy Father, may I tell you in simplicity of heart that, trusting in your ministry of universal pastor, we love you". And it is the Pope's turn to speak to the young people. He speaks with a resonant voice and a savoury Slavonic accent. "Like you, the Pope is only passing through. But one passes at Taizé as one passes near to a spring of water. The traveller stops, quenches his thirst and continues on his way".

Then the Pope leaves the podium and kneels down with the brothers for a few minutes of prayer. The song "Christus Resurrexit" fills the church. But the absence of the helicopters means the prayer has to be cut short: do I discern a look of disappointment on the face of the Holy Father as he learns this?

After a brief meeting with the brothers of the community in a room adjacent to the church, the Pope decides, contrary to the plans, to go into the church once again for a last contact with all who are gathered there. "I have to confess that I must go", he begins. "You know, the Pope has many superiors! He has to obey!" Laughter explodes with loud applause, and the singing begins again as the Pope moves to leave.

10.30am. After a hot drink, everyone is back in the church with the brothers. Cardinal Daneels, primate of Belgium, celebrates the Eucharist. Most of the young people present will be going to Lyon in the afternoon for the youth gathering with the Pope in Gerland stadium. Like the Pope, they have just been passing through Taizé and continue on their way.

EXTRACTS FROM NEWSPAPER ARTICLES



prayer read by the Holy Father after a moment of
prayer before the Blessed Sacrament.

O God,
we praise you for the
multitudes of women,
men, young people and
children who, across the
earth, strive to be
witnesses of peace, trust
and reconciliation. In the
footsteps of the holy
witnesses to Christ of
every age, beginning with
Mary and the Apostles,
enable us to dispose
ourselves day after day to
place our trust in the
mystery of the faith of
your Church, through
Jesus Christ, your Son,
our Lord.
Amen.

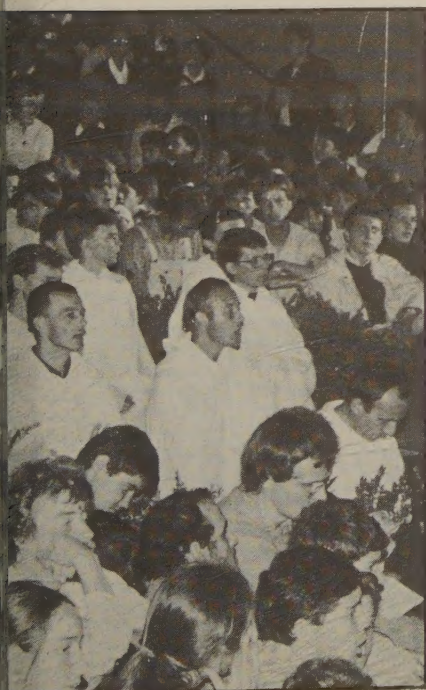


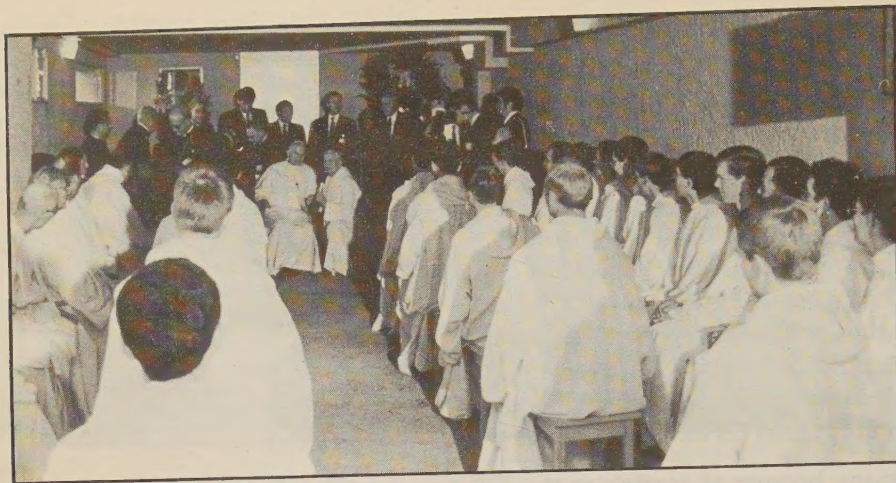
tions, because of routine or the deficiencies of their members, are not sufficiently at the service of the Gospel message. Because of this the Church needs the witness of your hope and your zeal in order to fulfill her mission better. Do not be content to criticize passively or to wait for persons or institutions to become better. Go towards the parishes, the student organizations, the different movements and communities, and patiently bring them the force of your youth and the talents you have received. Bring your trust and support to the ministers of the Church; they are your servants in the name of Jesus, and for that reason you need them. The Church needs your presence and your participation. If you remain within the Church, you will of course at times be upset by divisions, internal tensions and the sad state of its members, but you will receive from Christ, who is the Head, his Word of Truth, his own Life, and the Breath of love that will enable you to love him faithfully and to make your life a success by risking it in a joyful gift for others.

3. Dear young people, dear Brothers and dear Sisters who welcome them here or who, with them and for them, are pilgrims of reconciliation throughout the world, there is not enough time for me to speak to you at greater length this morning as I will do this evening in Lyon before the large gathering of young people from the area. Allow me simply to remind you of the apostolic Letter I addressed to all the young, last year, on the occasion of the international year of youth. There I developed my reflection, for the most part, around the well-known Gospel text that tells us of Christ's dialogue with a young man (cf. Mark 10,17-22). May you deepen constantly your own dialogue with Christ and become aware with him of the whole of your Christian vocation!

4. Remember as well these words of Jesus: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am in their midst" (cf. Matt 18,20). When a family, a small group, a larger community or a parish come together in the name of Jesus, to welcome one another and to serve one another as brothers and sisters, to pray together to God, to reflect on his Word and, if they are in full communion with the Church, to participate in the Eucharist celebrated by a priest, then the Saviour's work of reconciling and gathering together goes forward in the world. There men and women, young people, children, hear the call to serve their brothers and sisters, and receive provisions for their mission. They have peace and inner strength, but they perceive with greater lucidity the scandal of Churches and Christian communities that are not yet fully reconciled in the truth of faith and in love, of peoples still at war, of entire populations that are still starving, of injustices that are still triumphant. Having become creators of reconciliation and peace, they know that Christ walks alongside them and that he himself gives them the charity and the hope so that, with daring and courage, they may take the roads that can lead to a renewal of the world.

Dear Brothers, dear Sisters, dear friends: "May the God of hope give you, in your act of faith, joy and peace in fullness, so that you may be overflowing with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit!" (Rom 15,13). □





The Pope's greeting to the community

Dear Brothers,

In the family-like intimacy of this brief meeting, I would like to express to you my affection and my trust with these simple words, with which Pope John XXIII, who loved you so much, greeted Brother Roger one day: "Ah, Taizé, that little springtime!"

My desire is that the Lord may keep you like a springtime that blossoms and that He keep you little, in the joy of the Gospel and the transparency of brotherly love. Each of you came here to live in the mercy of God and the community of his brothers. In consecrating your whole being to Christ for love of him, you have found both of these. But in addition, although you did not look for it, you have seen young people from everywhere come to you by the thousands, attracted by your prayer and your community life. How can we not think that these young people are the gift and the means the Lord gives you to stimulate you to remain together, in the joy and the freshness of your gift, as a springtime for all who are searching for true life? Throughout your days, work, rest, prayer, everything is quickened by the Word of God that takes hold of you, that keeps you little, in other words children of the heavenly Father, brothers and servants of all in the joy of the Beatitudes.

I do not forget that in its unique, original and in a certain sense provisional vocation, your community can awaken astonishment and encounter incomprehension and suspicion. But because of your passion for the reconciliation of all Christians in a full communion, because of your love for the Church, you will be able to continue, I am sure, to be open to the will of the Lord. By listening to the criticisms or suggestions of Christians of different Churches and Christian communities and keeping what is good, by remaining in dialogue with all but not hesitating to express your expectations and your projects, you will not disappoint the young, and you will be instrumental in making sure that the effort desired by Christ to recover the visible unity of his Body in the full communion of one same faith never slackens. You know how much I personally consider ecumenism a necessity incumbent upon me, a pastoral priority in my ministry for which I count on your prayer.

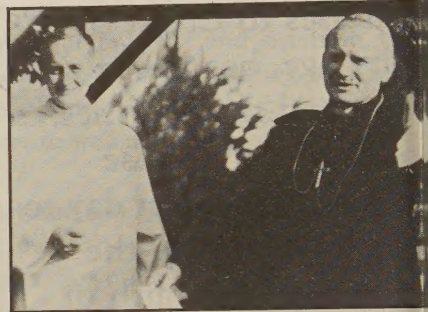
By desiring to be yourselves a "parable of community", you will help all whom you meet to be faithful to their denominational ties, the fruit of their education and their choice in conscience, but also to enter more and more deeply into the mystery of communion that the Church is in God's plan. By his Gift to his Church, Christ liberates in every Christian forces of love and gives them a universal heart to be creators of justice and peace, able to unite to their contemplation a struggle along the lines of the Gospel for the integral liberation of human beings, of every human being and of the entire human being.

Dear Brothers, I thank you for having invited me and thus having given me the opportunity to return to Taizé. May the Lord bless you and keep you in his peace and his love! □

While the singing continued in the church, the Pope went down into an adjacent room to meet the community. He had prepared a text to read (published here) but he spoke spontaneously.

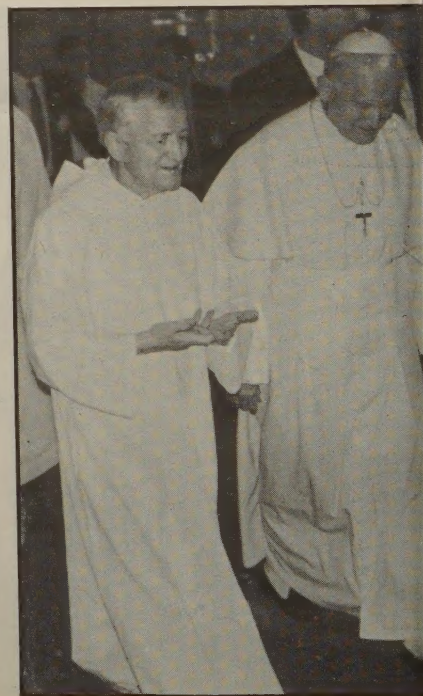
I HAVE KNOWN YOU FOR A LONG TIME

The Pope, who has already been to Taizé in 1964 and 1968, reminded the brothers that he has known the community personally for a long time, "I visited you when you were younger. But today you have become younger still". He recalled Brother Roger's visits to Poland, and of his words on the Virgin Mary about the ministry of the universal pastor. And so John Paul II "felt obliged, not exteriorly, but in my heart, to come to see you". Since his election in 1978, the Pope has received Brother Roger each year, and he has clearly not forgotten the European Meetings in Rome: "Rome is always open to your visit with young people".



Cardinal Wojtyla at Taizé in 1968

Even in the foggy weather, the Pope saw a sign. "It is a sign of the unknown. Abraham passed through the unknown. We all pass through the unknown which must precede knowledge face to face. I hope that you will be able to accomplish this well, and pass, in faith, through the unknown to full knowledge."



1 Mon Isaiah 1.2-3,16-18
Matthew 24.4-8,13-14
Paul wrote: We should not try to please ourselves but consider what is good for our neighbours and so build up community.

Romans 15.1-6

2 Tue Is 2.2-5
Rm 15.7-13
Jesus said: Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

Mt 24.23-27,32-36

3 Wed Is 4.2-6
Rm 16.25-27
Jesus said to his disciples: Be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

Mt 24.42-47

4 Thu Is 5.1-4 . Revelation 1.4-8
Mt 25.1-13
Lord, your faithful love supports me; however great the anxiety of my heart, your consolation brings joy to my soul.

Ps 94.18-19

5 Fri Rv 1.17-18
Mt 25.14-28
Isaiah heard an angel of the Lord tell him: Your guilt has been removed, your sin forgiven.

Is 6.1-8

6 Sat Is 7.10-14
Jesus said: In so far as you did good to one of the least of my brothers, you did it to me.

Mt 25.34-40

7 SUN Rm 15.4-9
Mt 3.1-12
Isaiah said: On that day no more hurt or harm shall be done, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the bottom of the sea.

Is 11.1-10

8 Mon Is 8.11-13a,17-18
Rv 2.1-7
Mary said: The Lord has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty-handed.

Luke 1.46-55

9 Tue Rv 2.8-10
Lk 1.1-10
The Messiah will not base his verdict on hearsay. He will judge the weak with justice and give fair sentence for the humblest in the land.

Is 11.5-9

10 Wed Lk 1.11-25
Thus says the Lord: See, I have placed before you an open door which no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and not denied my name.

Rv 3.7-8,11-12

These short readings, taken from the midday prayer in Taizé, can be read several times during the day. The references indicate longer readings. If you have time to read only one, the one in bold type is suggested.

11 Thu Rv 21.1-4
Lk 1.26-38
Isaiah said: Joyfully you will draw water from the springs of salvation, and you will say "Praise the Lord and invoke his name. Proclaim his deeds to the people!"

Is 12.2-6

12 Fri Is 25.1,3-5
Rv 21.5-7
Elizabeth said to Mary: Blessed is she who believed that the promise made to her by the Lord would be fulfilled.

Lk 1.39-45

13 Sat Lk 1.57-66
The Lord has destroyed the veil of mourning which veiled all peoples. He has destroyed death for ever.

Is 25. 6-9

14 SUN Is 35.1-6
Mt 11.2-11
Be patient and stand firm. Do not complain about one another, so as not to be brought to judgement yourselves.

James 5.7-10

15 Mon Rv 21.10-11,22-25
Lk 1.67-80
Lord, you smooth the honest pathway of the one who is just. Following on that path we set our hope in you: you are the desire of our hearts.

Is 26.4-13

16 Tue Is 28.16-17a
Rv 22.1,5-8,9
John the Baptist said to the crowds: Anyone who has two tunics must share with the one who has none, and anyone with something to eat must do the same.

Lk 3.10-18

17 Wed Is 29.18-23
John 1.1-9
God has given us very great and precious promises so that we may share the divine nature.

2 Peter 1.1-4

18 Thu Is 30.15-18
Jn 1.19-28
Seek goodness, understanding, self-control, brotherly kindness and love. These things will prevent your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ from being ineffectual or unproductive.

2 Pet 1.5-11

19 Fri Is 30.19-21,26
2 Pet 1.12-16
God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have everlasting life.

Jn 3.16-17

20 Sat Is 32.15-20
John the Baptist said: I am not the Christ; I am the one who has been sent ahead of him. He must grow greater and I must grow less.

Jn 3.26-30

21 SUN Is 7.10-14 . Rm 1.1-7
Mt 1.18-24
Lord, my heart says of you, "Seek his face!"

Ps 27

22 Mon Is 35.1-4a
2 Pet 1.17-21
The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands. Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life.

Jn 3.31-36

23 Tue Is 60.1-5
Jn 8.12-16
God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in Christ, and through him to reconcile to himself all things.

Colossians 1.15-20

24 Wed Is 62.1-5
Hebrews 1.1-6
The angel said to Mary: Do not be afraid, you have found favour with God. You will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus.

Lk 1.26-38

25 Thu Is 9.1-6
Titus 2.11-14
CHRISTMAS DAY
The angel of the Lord said to the shepherds: Do not be afraid. I bring you news of a great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people: today a Saviour has been born to you, he is Christ the Lord.

Lk 2.1-14

26 Fri Is 35.5-10
Acts 7.55-60
ST STEPHEN
The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. To all those who received him he gave the right to become children of God.

Jn 1.9-13

27 Sat Is 52.7-10
Jn 1.14-18
ST JOHN
John wrote: Here is the message we heard from Christ: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

1 Jn 1.1-7

28 SUN Ecclesiasticus 2.1-6
Mt 2.13-15,19-23
Bear with one another and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. The Lord has forgiven you, do the same in your turn.

Col 3.12-17

29 Mon Exodus 13.21-22
Galatians 3.26-28
Jesus told those whom he sent out: Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me; and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.

Mt 10.40-42

30 Tue Is 42.1-4
Lk 22.24-27
John wrote: If we walk in the light as God is in the light, then we are in communion with one another.

1 Jn 1.5-7

31 Wed Is 54.8,10
Mark 4.26-29
God, who has called you into communion with his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, is faithful.

1 Corinthians 1.4-9

1 Thu Romans 8.31-39
John 14.27-29
Peace, peace to those who are near and those who are far away, says the Lord, and I will heal them.

Isaiah 57.14-19

2 Fri Jeremiah 31.33-34
2 Corinthians 3.16-18
Jesus said: It is by your love for one another that everyone will recognise you as my disciples.

Jn 13.34-35

3 Sat Jn 14.6-9a
Seek the Lord in simplicity of heart; for he will be found by those who do not put him to the test, he reveals himself to those who do not mistrust him.

Wisdom 1.1-5

4 SUN Ecclesiasticus 24.1,2-8,12
Jn 1.1-18
May God enlighten the eyes of your hearts, that you may see what hope his call holds for you.

Ephesians 1.3-18

5 Mon Ws 1.7,12-15
Luke 2.41-52
Peter wrote: The Lord is not slow in carrying out his promises, as some people think he is, rather he is being patient with you, wanting nobody to be lost and for all to be brought to repentance.

2 Peter 3.3-4,8-9

6 Tue Is 60.1-6
Matthew 2.1-12
EPIPHANY Paul wrote: All now have the same inheritance, are members of the same Body and share in the same promise, in Christ Jesus.

Eph 3.1-6

7 Wed Genesis 1.1-5
Mt 2.13-18
In keeping with God's promise, we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where justice will dwell.

2 Pet 3.13-18

8 Thu Gn 1.26-27
Mt 2.19-23
Paul wrote to the Thessalonians: Despite great suffering, you welcomed the Word of God with the joy of the Holy Spirit, and so you became a model for all believers.

1 Thessalonians 1.1-7

9 Fri Gn 1.31-2.3
Mt 3.1-6
God has entrusted us with the Gospel; and so we preach, not trying to please human beings but God who knows our hearts.

1 Th 2.1-7a

10 Sat Gn 2.4b-7
Mt 3.7-11
I said: I will go to the Lord and confess my sin. And you took away my guilt and forgave my sin.

Ps 32

Meditating on the Word

February 1987

11 SUN

Acts 10.34-38
Mt 3.13-17

The Lord says: Here is my servant upon whom I have set my Spirit. He does not cry out or raise his voice. Faithfully he presents fair judgement.

Is 42.1-7

12 Mon

Gn 8.1-12
Mt 4.1-11

Paul wrote: We thank God because when you received the Word you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the Word of God, which is at work in you who believe.

1 Th 2.7b-13

13 Tue

Gn 9.11-16
1 Th 3.6-13

Jesus said: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.

Mt 4.12-17

14 Wed

1 Th 4.1-12
Mt 4.18-25

The Lord said to Abraham, "Leave your country, your kinsfolk and your father's house for the land I will show you." And Abraham went as the Lord had told him.

Gn 12.1-7

15 Thu

Gn 13.1-18
1 Th 4.13-18

Jesus' disciples came to him, and he taught them saying: Blessed are the poor in spirit, the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

Mt 5.1-12

16 Fri

Gn 15.1-6
1 Th 5.1-6

Jesus said to his disciples: Let your light shine in people's sight so that they may give praise to your Father in heaven.

Mt 5.13-16

17 Sat

Gn 18.1-15

Jesus said: Do not imagine that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to complete them.

Mt 5.17-20,23-24

18 SUN

Is 49.3-6
1 Cor 1.1-3
Jn 1.29-34

My guilt has overwhelmed me like a burden too heavy to bear. In you, Lord, I put my hope; you, Lord my God, will give answer.

Ps 38

19 Mon

Gn 28.12-17
Mt 5.33-42

See that no one repays evil for evil; seek what is best, for each other and for everyone.

1 Th 5.9-15

20 Tue

Gn 32.23-31
1 Th 5.16-24

Jesus said: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven.

Mt 5.43-48

21 Wed

Galatians 1.1-10
Mt 6.1-6

Joseph forgave his brothers saying: Do not be afraid; is it for me to put myself in God's place? The evil you planned to do to me has by God's design been turned to good.

Gn 50.15-21

22 Thu

Ws 2.23, 3.1-5a
Ga 1.11-24

Jesus said: Your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

Mt 6.7-15

23 Fri

Ga 2.16-21
Mt 6.16-21

God has purified the upright like gold in a furnace.

Ws 3.5b-9

24 Sat

Ws 5.15-16
Mt 6.22-24

All your commands are trustworthy, Lord; help me for I am persecuted without cause. True to your faithful love, give me life.

Ps 119.81-88

25 SUN

Is 9.1-3
Mt 4.12-23

May there be no divisions among you. Be closely united in mind and thought.

1 Cor 1.10-17

26 Mon

Ws 6.10-16
Ga 3.1-9

Jesus said: Do not worry about your life. Seek first God's kingdom and his saving justice.

Mt 6.25-34

27 Tue

Ws 7.7-10,15-16
Mt 7.1-5

Paul wrote: You have been clothed in Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor freeman, neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Ga 3.23-29

28 Wed

Ws 7.21-26
Ga 4.1-7

Jesus said: Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you.

Mt 7.7-12

29 Thu

Ws 7.27-8.1
Mt 7.15-20

You were called to be free; do not use your freedom for self-indulgence, but be servants to one another in love.

Ga 5.1,13-18

30 Fri

Ws 9.11-18
Ga 5.22-25

Jesus said: It is not the one who says to me, "Lord, Lord," who will enter the kingdom of heaven but the person who does the will of my Father.

Mt 7.21-29

31 Sat

Mt 8.1-13

Lord, you are merciful to all, because you are almighty. You overlook people's sins, so that they can repent. Yes, you love everything that exists.

Ws 11.22-12.2

1 SUN

Zephaniah 2.3a
Matthew 5.1-12

God chose those who by human standards are weak to confound the strong. He chose what is lowly and despised in the eyes of the world.

1 Corinthians 1.26-31

2 Mon

Malachi 3.1-4
Luke 2.22-40

PRESENTATION OF THE LORD Because Christ himself suffered when he was put to the test, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Hebrews 2.14-18

3 Tue

Exodus 3.1-6
Galatians 6.1-5

Jesus said: Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.

Mt 8.14-22

4 Wed

Ga 6.6-10
Mt 9.1-8

The Lord said: I have seen the misery of my people. I have heard them crying for help because of their oppressors, yes, I know their sufferings.

Ex 3.7-12

5 Thu

Ex 3.13-14
Ga 6.14-18

Jesus saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he said to him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

Mt 9.9-13

6 Fri

Ex 4.10-15
Mt 9.14-17

Paul wrote: I thank our Lord Jesus Christ who has given me strength, and who has judged me trustworthy by calling me into his service.

1 Timothy 1.1-2,12-17

7 Sat

Ex 6.5-9

Jesus said to a woman whom he had healed: Have courage, daughter, your faith has saved you.

Mt 9.18-34

8 SUN

1 Cor 2.1-5
Mt 5.13-16

If you break the fetters of injustice to set free the oppressed, if you share your food with the hungry and shelter the homeless, then your light will break forth like the dawn and your wound will quickly be healed.

Is 58.6-10

9 Mon

1 Tm 2.1-8
Mt 9.35-38

The Lord went before his people in the desert. By day he was in a pillar of cloud to show them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light; so they were able to go by day and by night.

Ex 13.17-22

10 Tue

1 Tm 3.14-16
Mt 10.1-10

Moses said to the people: Do not be afraid! Stand firm and you will see what the Lord will do to save you today.

Ex 14.11-14

11 Wed

Ex 15.1-2,14
1 Tm 4.4-11

Jesus said: When you are handed over to your accusers, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

Mt 10.11-20

12 Thu

Ex 16.4-38
1 Tm 4.12-5/7

Jesus said to his disciples: You will be universally hated because of me; but anyone who stands firm to the end will be saved.

Mt 10.22-23

13 Fri

Mt 10.28-32
Ex 19.3-17
1 Tm 6.3-10

I said: Here I am, I have come, and as it is written, I desire to do your will, my God. Your law is deep within my heart.

Ps 40.1-11

14 Sat

Ex 20.1-3,12-17

Jesus said to his disciples: Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me; and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sends me.

Mt 10.37-42

15 SUN

Ecclesiasticus 15.15-29
1 Cor 2.6-11

Jesus said: If you are bringing your offering to the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, go and be reconciled with your brother first, and then come back and present your offering.

Mt 5.17-22

16 Mon

1 Tm 6.11-18
Mt 11.1-10

The Lord said to his people: Do not mistreat or oppress the stranger in you midst, for you too were once strangers in the land of Egypt.

Ex 22.20-21,23

17 Tue

1 Tm 6.17-21
Ex 33.12-17
Mt 11.7-10

I think of all your deeds, Lord, and ponder the works of your hands: stretch out my hands to you; my soul thirsts for you like a parched land.

Ps 143.5-11

18 Wed

Ex 33.18-22
2 Tm 1.1-7

Jesus said: I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever, and revealing them to little children.

Mt 11.16-19,25-27

19 Thu

Ex 34.29-38
Mt 11.27-30

Paul wrote to Timothy: I remind you to fan into a flame the gift of God. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of inner strength, of love and of self-control.

2 Tm 1.6-9

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